This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

stalling a call to a critical operating system (OS) function; and

determining whether said call is from execution of a return instruction comprising:

looking up a value at a previous top of stack; and

determining whether said value is equivalent to an address of said critical OS function,

wherein upon a determination that said call is from execution of said return instruction during said determining, said method further comprising taking protective action to protect a computer system.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~1 wherein a determination is made that said call is from execution of a return instruction when a determination is made that said value is equivalent to said address of said critical OS function.

4. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~1 wherein a determination is made that said call is not from execution of a return instruction when a determination is made that said value is not equivalent to said address of said critical OS function.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~1 further comprising allowing said call to proceed upon a determination

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that said value is not equivalent to said address of said critical OS function.

7. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~ 1 wherein said previous top of stack is at address [ESP-4].

8. (Original) The method of Claim 7 wherein a top of stack is at address [ESP].

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~9~~ 1 wherein said taking protective action comprises terminating said call.

11. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~9~~ 1 wherein said taking protective action comprises terminating a call module originating said call.

12. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~9~~ 1 wherein said taking protective action comprises terminating a parent application comprising a call module originating said call.

13. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~9~~ 1 further comprising providing a notification that said protective action has been taken.

14. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 1 wherein upon a determination that said call is from execution of said return instruction during said determining, said method further comprising determining whether said call is a known false positive.

15. (Currently amended) The method of Claim 14 wherein upon a determination that said call is not said known false

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positive, said ~~method further comprising~~ taking protective action to protect a computer system is performed.

16. (Currently amended) The method of Claim ~~15~~ 1 further comprising providing a notification that said protective action has been taken.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 14 wherein upon a determination that said call is said known false positive, said method further comprising allowing said call to proceed.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising hooking said critical OS function.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 1 further comprising originating said call to said critical OS function.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein said critical OS function is necessary for a first application to cause execution of a second application.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 20 wherein said second application allows remote access of a computer system.

22. (Original) A method comprising:

stalling a call to a critical operating system (OS) function;

looking up a value at a previous top of stack; and

determining whether said value is equivalent to an address of said critical OS function, wherein upon a determination that said value is equivalent to said address of said critical OS function, said method further comprising taking protective action to protect a computer system.

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23. (Original) The method of Claim 22 wherein upon a determination that said value is not equivalent to said address of said critical OS function, said method further comprising allowing said call to proceed.

24. (Currently amended) A computer program product comprising a tangible computer readable medium containing computer program code comprising:

a Return-to-LIBC attack blocking application for stalling a call to a critical operating system (OS) function;

said Return-to-LIBC attack blocking application further for looking up a value at a previous top of stack; and

said Return-to-LIBC attack blocking application further for determining whether said value is equivalent to an address of said critical OS function, wherein upon a determination that said value is equivalent to said address of said critical OS function, said Return-to-LIBC attack blocking application further for taking protective action to protect a computer system comprising said Return-to-LIBC attack blocking application.

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